FRENCH BEACH PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

March 2003

Approved by:

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Date: March 25/03

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Date: Mar. 11/03

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Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary role** of French Beach Provincial Park is to provide day use and overnight recreation opportunities in a popular destination along the scenic southwestern side of Vancouver Island. International, provincial, local and regional visitors are provided with opportunities to camp, swim, picnic, fish, hike and enjoy wildlife viewing. Whale watching is a popular activity especially during annual migration periods of Gray whales travelling along the west coast of North America from Mexico to Alaska. Only a one hour drive from Greater Victoria, this semi-wilderness area situated between Sooke and Port Renfrew is growing in popularity and French Beach campground is one of the first provincial parks to fill up in the spring on south Vancouver Island. This park is well developed and has a 69 unit campground, day use picnic and parking area, group campground, sanitary facilities, trails and sani-station which was rebuilt in 2001. The development of China Beach campground in Juan de Fuca Provincial Park has also provided additional vehicle access recreation opportunities along the scenic West Coast Highway.

Secondary Role

The secondary role of French Beach Provincial Park is to protect a highly scenic section of west coast shoreline containing stands of old growth Douglas-fir forest typically found in the Leeward Island Mountains Ecosection. Many larger mammals such as cougar and black bear use the streams and park as a natural corridor. The park also protects fish habitat in Frenchholme and Goudie creeks and provides habitat for nodding semaphore grass (blue-listed).

Known Management Issues	Response
Informal access from neighbours	Review existing trail system to determine what trails should be closed and whether new trails need to be built.
Air quality from fires	Ensure wood quality is high and monitor during high use periods.
Problem wildlife	Ensure facilities/management meet People/Wildlife Management guidelines.
Vehicle break-ins have been a problem in past as well as intermittent thefts from campsites.	Park Watch Program formally introduced to parks along the West Coast corridor, resulting in a significant reduction in the number of thefts. Partnerships with Juan de Fuca Community Futures, ICBC, RCMP, etc were expected to continue but federal funding was pulled (Federal government was a principal partner in Community Futures for 2002 program). Continue on-going discussions in an effort to revive program.
Shellfish, particularly mussels, have nearly been eliminated from park due to recreational harvesting.	Pursue a harvesting closure with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Investigate the addition of 200 metre foreshore along existing marine park boundary to protect intertidal and marine values.
Nodding Semaphore Grass location.	Inventories and research are required to

	determine locations, numbers and risks associated with sensitive ecosystems, plant communities to ensure their continued protection from development and human impact.
Campground requires major upgrading; proposed additional day use parking, toilet/change building and other facility development (culverts, signage etc.) need to be reviewed as part of management planning process.	Prepare a management plan (2004/05) to give long term direction and policy for future development of the park. Impact assessment for any proposed park facility development will be required.
Ongoing park management issues such as weed control and revegetation need to be addressed.	Develop a Vegetation Management Plan.

Zoning

The Intensive Recreation Zone comprises the day use play, beach and parking areas, campground, group site, service area and sani-station (approximately 46% of the park). The beach area is zoned as Special Feature (approximately 6% of the park), while the remainder of the park is zoned Natural Environment (approximately 48 % of the park).

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☐	Leeward Island Mountains Ecosection (16% protected in protected areas system); French Beach makes insignificant contribution.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☐	French Beach Park makes insignificant contribution to CWHxm2 biogeoclimatic variant.
Special Feature	☒	West Coast experience – access to major gravel/sand beach along popular west coast of southern Vancouver Island; old growth forested upland with hiking trails.
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Nodding semaphore grass (blue-listed).
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☐	

Recreation

Representation backcountry	☐	
destination	☒	Popular family and group campgrounds for Vancouver Island residents and visitors.
travel corridor	☒	Along increasingly popular West Coast Highway that ends at Port Renfrew. Other attractions include Jordan River, Point No Point, Juan de Fuca Park, West Coast Trail, Botanical Beach and village of Port Renfrew. (gravel all season logging road connects to Lake Cowichan from Port Renfrew).
local recreation	☒	Local/regional overnight and day use opportunities.
Special Opportunities	☐	
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☐	Wildlife viewing of migrating whales.

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	First Nations history in the area is unknown.

Special Feature	☒	History of French family (long time area residents).

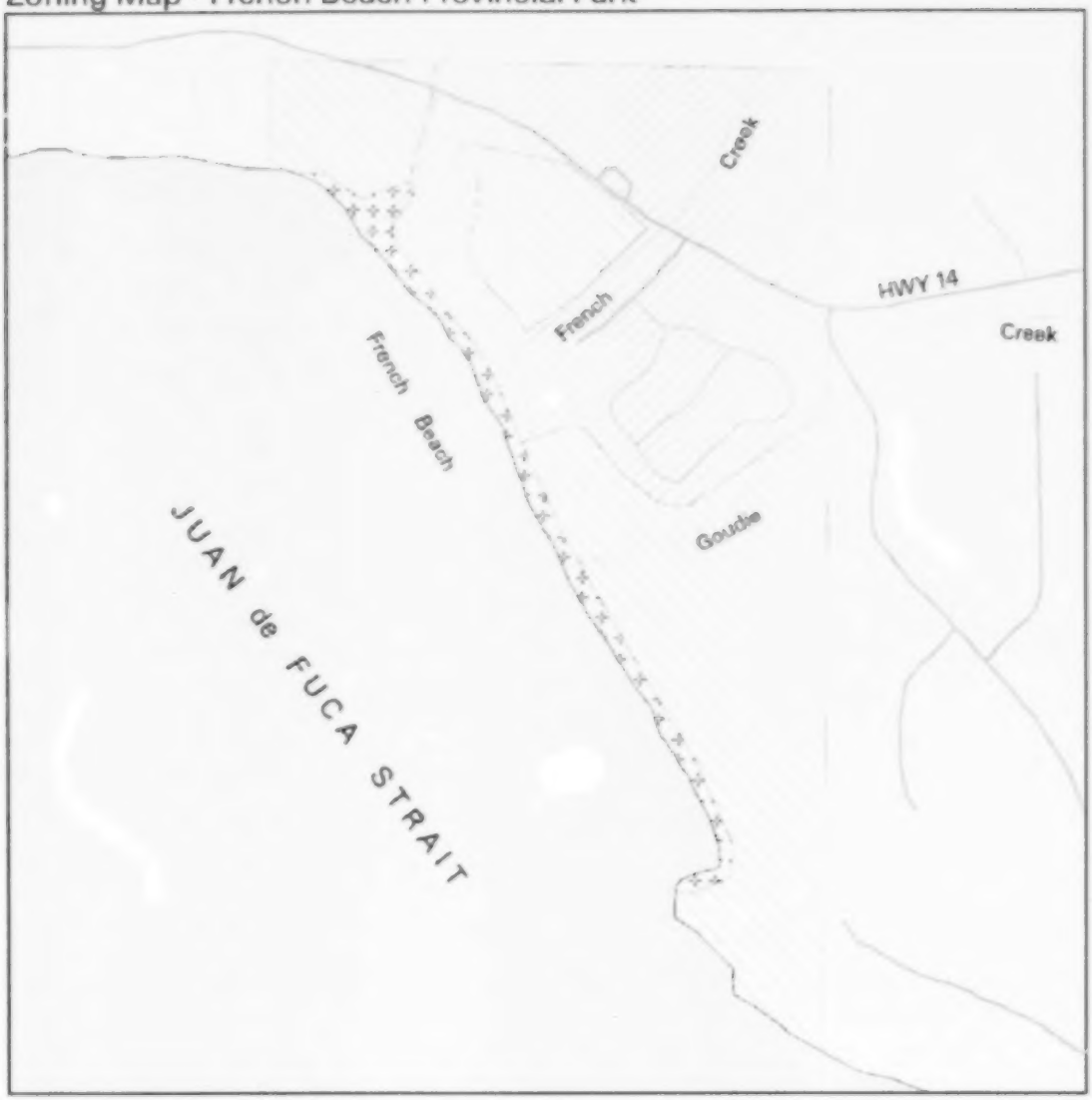
Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of west coast linear corridor experience and gateway to Juan de Fuca Provincial Park.
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	
Partnerships	☒	Local "Park Watch" initiative (reduce auto theft/vandalism); cooperation with local Chambers of Commerce to promote regional tourism attractions.
Vulnerability	☒	Vandalism, shellfish harvesting; oil spill contamination.
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Community Futures 2002 program.

Area: 59 hectares

Date of establishment: January 24, 1974

Zoning Map - French Beach Provincial Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Intensive Recreation
Natural Environment
Special Feature
Protected Area Boundary

0 100
m

Produced in Sep 2003 for Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection by MSRM, Decision Support Services

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